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Tenement Houses. Although the unsanitary and uneconomic conditions of tenement houses in most of our large cities have been exposed to public view time and again by social research workers and special commissions, it seems indeed strange that amendatory legislation should be so bitterly resented. A brief survey of the fight for the passage of the law in New Jersey will show the opposition that supporters of the bill meet in nearly all states. The New Jersey law is most minute in detail and thorough in its requirements. The movement for better housing conditions in this state had its origin in the efforts of several private organizations, such as the Civic Sanitation Society of the Oranges. Through the assistance of the several members of the present board of tenement house supervision the interest of Governor Franklin Murphy was enlisted and during the legislative session of 1903 a joint resolution was passed by the legislature authorizing the appointment, by the governor, of a commission to investigate the condition of tenement houses throughout the state and to report to the next succeeding legislature with recommendations. The commission consisted of the present membership of the board, with the exception of one member who has succeeded one of the original investigators. The commission made an exhaustive study of tenement house conditions in the state and reported to the legislature with a draft of a bill which was patterned somewhat after the tenement house law of New York, rewritten to better suit existing conditions. One special feature of the bill was that it applied to the whole state rather than to cities of the first class, as such acts do in most of the other states that have laws of this sort. The bill was introduced into the House of Assembly and passed the house with the unanimous vote of the members. It was not until the bill appeared in the Senate that the opposition of the owners of tenement property, the speculator builders and lessees of entire tenements became aroused. A powerful lobby was organized and a determined fight was waged in the senate against the bill. It was attacked in detail, section by section, and while the opposition did not succeed in defeating it, it did succeed in killing several features, reducing the dimensions of the courts, etc., and forcing other changes in the provisions of the bill. The measure passed the Senate with the requisite number of votes without one to spare on the last day of the session. Governor Murphy signed the bill the same night and then promptly appointed the board so that the new law might become operative at once.

Wisconsin passed a law in 1907, but the Supreme Court declared it to be unconstitutional (*Bonnett v. Vallier et al.*) There were ideal provisions in this law and another law embodying these same ideal provisions has been recommended. In 1909 two acts became law in this state, one regulating the construction of apartment houses, boarding and lodging and tenement houses in cities of the first class, and the other, relative to the improvement and regulation of sanitation in apartment, tenement, lodging and boarding houses in cities of the first, second and third classes.

New York's tenement house investigation commission was appointed by the governor in 1900 to report at the next general assembly concerning tenement houses in first class cities, their condition as to construction, safety, rentals, and the effect of tenement house life on health, education, savings and morals. In accordance with the recommendations of this commission a tenement house act is now in force for regulation in cities of 250,000 population. Each city has its own department or inspector as the case may be. Connecticut has a general state law regulating conditions in cities of 20,000 inhabitants, although this law may apply to smaller cities if the city ordinances so provide. The act is enforced by all inspectors of buildings, fire chiefs, or the officer or officers who issue building permits. In some cases, as in Massachusetts the provisions of the building code supply the necessary restrictions for tenement houses in the city of Boston, the building regulations for cities of the first class cover all essential features of a tenement house law and these regulations are enforced by the bureaus of building inspection, fire wardens, police departments and other municipal officers under whose jurisdiction this enforcement would naturally fall. In many cases ordinances of city councils and the mayors regulate conditions without the aid of a state law.

Tenement house conditions in different cities vary in such degree that special investigation is necessary for individual cases. The necessary provisions in a tenement house law must cover adequate protection against fire, sufficient light and ventilation, and in particular the problem of sanitation, with definite naming of the enforcing board. In some cases a special commission appointed by the governor to consider in detail the phases of the problem is most essential, but if interested social workers have already done this work, perhaps this special commission can be dispensed with. In Rhode Island, through the efforts of the Bureau of Social Research, a study of

existing conditions has been made and a tentative draft of a tenement house bill drawn, and introduced into the legislature. This act is modeled more or less upon the New York law and in brief covers the following provisions: (1.) Provisions for the construction of new tenements; (2.) provisions for the alteration of old tenements and the changing of other structures into tenements; (3.) improvements; (4.) maintenance; (5.) methods of procedure.

"A tenement house" is defined as any house or building, or portion thereof which is rented, leased, let or hired to be occupied by two or more families, independently of each other, and doing their cooking upon the premises. A tenement house within the fire district of Providence may occupy 85 per cent. of a corner lot and 70 per cent. of any other lot, while in the other cities of the State and outside of the fire district in the city of Providence, tenements may occupy 80 per cent. of a corner lot and 60 per cent. of any other lot. The height of buildings is limited to the distance between building lines on the widest street upon which the tenement stands. Courts are limited to 12 feet square, if the building is 48 feet high, and an increase or decrease of one foot square for every 12 feet of height above or below 48 feet. All courts are to be provided with a direct entrance from the street and connected with the yard, and must be provided with proper drainage at the bottom and no covering at the top. The lighting of rooms, ventilation, size of windows, alcoves, chimneys and fireplaces, the public halls and their windows and skylights and the windows for stair halls are all provided for. Basement and cellar rooms are not to be constructed unless they comply with the number of provisions which shall make these rooms practically as sanitary as those above ground level. Cellars must be damp-proof and must be constructed in a sanitary manner.

All tenement houses of four stories or over shall have the first floor constructed of fireproof material, with iron or steel beams, and fireproof flooring, etc. The provisions for compelling cleanliness and thorough sanitation are exhaustive. Every tenement house must have a janitor or housekeeper, or someone living in the house in charge of the premises so that the building may be kept in a cleanly condition. The public halls are expected to be lighted until 10 o'clock at night, and the lowest hall shall be provided with a light from sunset to sunrise.

Another chapter provides for the most approved plans, the proper method of recording and inspecting buildings, and other measures

necessary for the enforcement of the law, both by the building inspector and the health department. Large powers are given to the health department, so that its officials can properly combine its health regulation with house legislation.

There has been one hearing upon this bill, but the opposition now is very strongly against it, though it is quite possible that this measure may pass in a modified form. The pending bills in Indiana were defeated and a similar fate may be waiting for the Rhode Island measure.

GRACE SHERWOOD.

Congressional Legislation. In one of the longest messages ever delivered to Congress, President Taft laid out a comprehensive program of legislation for the short session which convened in December and closed March 4th. Many of his recommendations were unheeded, however, and Congress adjourned with very little to its credit beyond the appropriation acts.

Some of the recommendations which were not enacted into laws were: civil government of Alaska under a commission to be appointed by the president; reciprocity with Canada; modification of injunction proceedings; simplification of procedure in the federal courts; a permanent tariff commission; application of civil service reform to the consular service; volunteer army reorganization; a comprehensive conservation plan supplementing the laws enacted at the previous session; a national bureau of health; increase of second class postal rates; civil service retirement; appropriation to enable the interstate commerce commission to make physical valuation of railroads; legislation for the District of Columbia; ship subsidy; and eight hour day in its application to ship building.

Some of the specific recommendations of the president which were adopted were: fortification of the Panama canal; locomotive boiler inspection; appropriation to carry on investigations under the direction of the President into methods of economy and efficiency in the government business; government ownership of consulates and embassies abroad; protection of watersheds and conservation of navigable streams designed to enable the acquisition of the long talked of Appalachian forest reserve.

Other measures defeated or not acted upon were: constitutional amendment requiring election of United States senators by the people; reapportionment of representatives in Congress according to the new census; admission of New Mexico and Arizona into the Union; parcels